

## A REVIEW OF “SWARNA TANTRAM”- A TEXTBOOK ON ALCHEMY (LOHAVEDHA)

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### ABSTRACT

*Rasa vidya (Indian Alchemy) roots far back to Veda kaala. In the 8<sup>th</sup> Century, Nagarjuna- ‘Father of Rasashastra’ introduced this science to convert inexpensive metals like Copper, Lead and Tin to noble metals like Gold and Silver (Lohavedha), which gradually became a branch of Ayurveda- Rasashastra eventually empowering Ayurveda’s reach and fame altogether. But the core use of Rasashastra vijnana was for Lohavedha. The concept of providing stability and quality to the inexpensive Dhatus is similar to Dehavada and Chikitsa where the aim is to relieve one from his ill condition and grant him optimum health and stability. “Swarna Tantram” is one such book that deals extensively on Lohavedha. It comprises mainly of 88 Kalpas along with 2 sections touching upon types of Puta and Yantra, all these elucidated in 1561 slokas. This book also contains few references for Dehavada, Vishista prayogas, Vedha yantra nirmana and Ekamulika prayogas for Chikitsa. A few other books which are dedicated to Lohavedha are Rasarnava and Rasahrudaya tantra.*

**KEYWORDS:** Alchemy, Lohavedha, Parad & Swarna Tantram.

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### INTRODUCTION

Rasa vidya comprises of the most ancient pieces of evidence of rasashastra from the vedas. This later came to be called as Rasashastra from the period of Nagarjuna, who is credited with the title- Father of Rasashastra. Legend has it that Nagarjuna was from the land of Nalanda, which once suffered from exiguity at that time and by harnessing Swarnavidya, he made the land prosperous again.<sup>[1]</sup> These methods we're popularized as Dhatuvedha or Lohavedha. But according to Raseshwara darshanakara, Rasashastra is not merely meant for Dhatuvedha, but mukti being it's ultimate utility.<sup>[2]</sup>

Swarna Tantram is one of the noteworthy books in Rasashastra. This book has a Purvabhaga, named “Ratna Khanda”, which is mentioned at the beginning of the book. Swarna Tantram book comprises of 1,561 slokas. The major part i.e 1,530 slokas are dedicated to the 88 kalpas used for Lohavedha and few references for Dehavada, Vishista prayogas, Vedhayantara nirmana and Ekamulika prayogas for Chikitsa. This treatise is a gold mine for the seekers of knowledge regarding the 17<sup>th</sup> Samskara of Parada i.e Vedha Samskara for which we get some references in Rasaratna samucchaya regarding its types.<sup>[3]</sup>

### AUTHORSHIP AND HISTORY

The time and author of this book is not known. This book is a dialogue exchange between Parashurama and Lord Shankara, where Parashurama after being degraded by Kashyapa rishi and asked to forsake the land, prayed to

Lord Shiva for his survival and thus the Lord bestowed his blessing in the form of “Swarna Tantram”.

## TRANSLATION

The only available book is with original verses and its Hindi translation. It is mentioned that the book was originally obtained from an anonymous person of Nepali origin and later was translated by Shri Shyamsundar Shukla and published in the year 2013, thus adding one more Ratna to the collection of Rasagranthas.

## CONTENTS OF THE BOOK

### The preface of the book

- Samvada arambha.
- We come across the presence of a Purva Khanda- “Ratna Khanda” with 70,000 slokas. Major contents of this previous book are viz. Description of Ratnas, 2000 Parada gutikas, 6000 Parada bhasma, 8 Dhatu kalpas and 700 Haratala bhasma prakaranas.
- Types of Swarna, Raupya and Gutika with their respective qualities.
- In some contexts, the word “Swarna” is applied to even Tamra, Raupya and Loha, as they are the main Dhatus used for Vedha karma of Swarna.

Sl. No.	Types of Swarna	Types of Raupya	Types of Gutika	Quality
1	Bhumija(Sarasvata)	Nagaja	Taila baddha	Adhama
2	Dhatuja(Gangeya)	Vangaja	Dhatu baddha	Madhyama
3	Lataja(Jambunada)	Paradaja	Aushadhi baddha (Shubha)	Uttama

List of Kalpas mentioned in the book Swarna Tantram				
1. Taila kanda Kalpa	2. Katukushmanda Kalpa	3. Katuraktabimbi Kalpa	4. Sweta Gokshura Kalpa	
5. Shweta eranda Kalpa	6. Rakta eranda Kalpa	7. Krishna eranda Kalpa	8. Kakatundi Kalpa/kakari	
9. Siddha Swarna Kalpa	10. Dagdharoha Kalpa	11. Katutumbi Kalpa	12. Langali Kalpa	
13. Shweta Brihati Kalpa	14. Kantaka shirisha Kalpa	15. Brihatkantaka Kalpa	16. Palashavalli Kalpa	
17. Trivira Kalpa	18. Sweta nisha Kalpa	19. Pitaharidra Kalpa	20. Kalashaka Kalpa	
21. Again Pita haridra Kalpa	22. Brahmadandi Bhedini Kalpa	23. Loha, Tamra, Shankha, Dantaamla, Danta-dravaka Kalpa	24. Tamradrava Kalpa	
25. Shankhadrava Kalpa	26. Dantamladantadrava Kalpa	27. Kamadhenu/phalapanchaka Kalpa	28. Peeta tridharavajravalli Kalpa	
29. Rakta tridharavajravalli Kalpa	30. Rasa kamadhenu	31. Tridharavajradhar a Kalpa	32. Raktatridharavajrabhanu Kalpa	
33. Ekaveera Kalpa	34. Swarnaphalini siddhaushadi Kalpa/	35. Haridra vatsanabha Kalpa	36. Girikarni Kalpa	
37. Kakajhanga Kalpa	38. Raktakaraveera Kalpa	39. Krishnkaraveera	40. Rasa Kalpa	

41. Vanasurana Kalpa	42. GhritaKumari Kalpa	43. Rudanti Kalpa	44. Yoga Kalpa
45. Duhsparsa Kalpa	46. Brahmanda Kapala Kalpa	47. Trinajyoti Kalpa	48. Jyotishmati Kalpa
49. Somaraji Kalpa	50. Devadali Kalpa	51. Raktocchata Kalpa	52. Shwetagunja kalpa
53. Manduka Kalpa	54. Chitraka Kalpa	55. Krshnakarpasa(Aj anayika) Kalpa	56. Shivalingi Kalpa
57. Ekapatri Jalakhumbi Kalpa	58. Dwipatri Jalakumbhi Kalpa	59. Somalata Kalpa	60. Shakavriksha Kalpa
61. Rakta snuhi Kalpa	62. Kumudini Kalpa	63. Ankola Kalpa	64. Kupilu Kalpa
65. Visha Kalpa	66. Shalmali Kalpa	67. Shweta shalmali Kalpa	68. Haridra varna shalmali Kalpa
69. Raktashalmali Kalpa	70. Bilva Kalpa	71. Ishwari Kalpa	72. Palasha Kalpa
73. Jambu Kalpa	74. Nimba Kalpa	75. Agnimandara Kalpa	76. Mandara Kalpa
77. Narasara Kalpa	78. Soraka Kalpa	79. Sarjiak Kalpa	80. Rajividhanam
a) Hemaraji vidhanam	b) Prakasha raji	c) Ghosha /kamsya raji	d) Makshika Raji
e) Nagaraji	f) Rajigrasavidhana	81. Gandhakaabhave haritalam	82. Pasahanamanidru ti Kalpa
83. Uparasa-Satva Kalpa	a) Rasaka satva Kalpa	b) Shilasatva Kalpa	c) Talasatva Kalpa
d) Mallasatva Kalpa	84. Tikshna taijasa vari Kalpa	85. Abhrakadruti Kalpa	86. Taila Kalpa
a) Tikshna(rala) tailam	b) Gandhaka tailam	c) Bhunaga tailam	d) Vatsanabha tailam
e) Raktamalla tailam	87. Hiraka kalpa	88. Tuttha Bhasma vidhanam	

### Some Important and Unique Contents among 88 Kalpas

#### Lohavedha

- **Important Swarnavedha Kalpas**
  - Kakatundi kalpa/kakari Kalpa- Phalarasa of Kakatundi is added to Tamra drava to get Jambunada Swarna.
  - Katutumbi Kalpa- 4-9 or more Pittala needles are taken and in kartika masa puncture the katutumbi fruit (note not to puncture the seed), final product obtained after 3 months, in Magha month and kukkuta puta given to get Jambunada Swarna.
  - Langali Kalpa- Take Parada and Gandhaka in equal quantity and subject it to mardana with Langali mula, this paste is to be applied over Tamra patra and is given to obtain Swarna as the final product.
  - Loha, Tamra, shankha, dantaamla danta dravaka Kalpa- Bhasma obtained from Loha suchidrava and Parada. When this bhasma is added to a dhatu it turns to Kanchana; the person who consumes this bhasma will get amaratva and his mutra and purisha will also have the potency of converting Tamra to Swarna.

- Rasa kamadhenu Kalpa- This Kalpa mentions a special type of yantra called Kamadhenu yantra, along with the yantra preparation method. The prabhava of this yantra will be for 15 days. When any dhatu is done dalana in this yantra the dhatu becomes Swarna.
- Talatailam: A jatamatra shuka is taken, taila is obtained from the keeta (contains the sara of haratala) which gets developed from its purisha. This taila is applied over Tamra or Rajata patra to get Swarna and Sarvakarya siddhi.
- Nimba kalpa: 1 prastha Gandhaka churna is given mardana with nimba and tambula swarasa providing 100 puta to each. Taila is extracted and used in 1 bindu matra to convert Tamra or Rajata drava into Swarna. Swarna attains gurutva when 3 masha Swarna is added to taila and given puta. If equal parts of Swarna is added, then it becomes Chaturasi.
- Jambukalpa: Paste got by mardana of Jambu twak chewed spit and jambu nirayasa is applied to suchividdha Tamra patra (ardha tila pramana) and dried in shade. This is done 7 times. This is then heated to red hot and then beaten. This turns into Swarna on cooling.
- Manduka kalpa: In the month of Aswina or bhadrapada, a good size frog is caught. A Kunda is made and applied with lepa of gandhaka, keshara, nagakeshara, and other sugandhi dravyas and dried for 3 days. Then the kunda is filled with water halfway and the frog is kept in it. Gutika made of Shuddha Gandhaka and Chanaka is hung using a horse tail so as to feed the frog in the kunda. Later, 8 tola each of Gandhaka and Tankana are given bhavana with the frog urine and fed to it. After 2 weeks this compound will turn into a Masha pishta form. The mid back of the frog becomes like wheat and all its bones turn to mamsa. Next, water from the kunda is removed during the 4<sup>th</sup> week. The frog dies without water and has to be collected safely and its abdomen has to be dissected and equal parts of tankana and sphatika are to be filled in it and sutured back. Mrittika lepa is done and dried in shade and the frog is kept in a Sneha lipta bhanda covered with Sharava samputa. It is then filled with sand. After two months it has to be taken in a khalva and mardana is done to make Sukshma churna and is stored in the rind of Bilva phala. When this is added with 16 parts of Swarna, it does Swarna druti. This procedure can be done with sapta dhatus as well.
- Jyotishmati kalpa: Jyotishmati taila is made during Ashadha Purvapaksha. This taila is poured over Tamra patra and placed in a ghata and this is sealed and placed in the earth and heated from above. After 6 months, the ghata becomes Kanchana.
- **Important Rajatavedha Kalpas**
  - Kupilu kalpa: Parada is kept in a hole made in the Kupilu tree. After 1 month, Parada becomes navaneeta sama which helps in the formation of Rajata.
  - 1 Masha Shweta- Vanga bhasma is added with 1 prastha Vanga druti to obtain Kamasankhyaka Raupya.
  - Somaraji kalpa: Somaraji panchanga is given bhavana with kanji. If this Kalka is added with Vanga drava 7 times repeatedly, it converts to Rajata.
  - Ghrtakumari kalpa: Kumari plant is grown with mantra and jala. Tamra suchi is prepared and inserted

into its leaf repeatedly until the plant flowers. The Tamra suchi gets converted into Kandapushpa samana Raupya.

- Kakajangha kalpa: Kakajangha swarasa when given bhavana with Raupya forms Swarna; with hina Swarna- Uttama jambunada Swarna is formed and with Vanga drava we get Raupya.

#### • Important Kalpas Related to Parada Samskara

- Ishwari kalpa: Parada and gandhaka are taken in equal parts and made into kajjali. Ishwari swarasa is added to this with aja mutra and boiled to a kwatha. This is applied on Tamra patra, subject it to mardana and swedana given and Gutika is prepared. This is capable of performing Rasabandha and Sarva loha vedhi. With increased saptahas (i.e, 1-10 saptaha) of Jarana, Parada becomes Chatusshashti amsha vedhi, Shata amsha vedhi, Sahasra amsha vedhi, Laksha amsha vedhi, Kotyamsha vedhi, 1 Gunja matra vedhi, 1 Sarshapa matra vedhi, Sparshamatra vedhi, Udyotanakara and attains Maharasa guna respectively.
- Rajigrasavidhana: Nagaraji is added to Parada, then add Loharaji, Ghosharaji, Hemaraji and Makshikaraji. By this process Parada becomes Parada.
- Shivalingi kalpa: Shivalingi swarasa is given mardana with Parada and patana is done thrice to obtain Pauganda Parada.
- Navasadara kalpa: Navasadara swarasa is taken with Parada. If this does Jarana of Shadguna Pannaga, it is added with Rajata and Tamra. This mixture will do Koti amsha vedha of Parada.
- Chitraka kalpa: Krishna chitraka panchanga churna is given bhavana with Parada and heated in Andha musha. This is a form of Khota bandha.
- Rakta tridharavajrabhanu kalpa: Mahakamadhenu yantra preparation procedure is told which does Lohavedha and Parada marana.
- Taijasavari kalpa: This section mentions two types of vari kalpa, one for netra dosha harana and another for Parada siddhi.

#### • Other Important Lohavedha Kalpas

- Navasadara kalpa: 1 Prastha Soraka churna is added with Hastidanta churna and Malla and placed in a bhanda and sandhibandhana is done and dried in shade. Half prastha vanopala is used to heat this. Malla blooms like laja and becomes Agnisthayi.
- 1 Prastha Soraka churna is added to a darvi and made drava and to this 6 karsha of Arishta churna is added gradually till it burns fulls. It foams up and the Soraka becomes Agnisthayi.
- Visha kalpa: Rakta and Peeta Vatsanabha are boiled in Khara mutra for 1 prahara. If this is added to Swarna and Rajata, they attain Chandrikatva. This is called Yugma kriya.
- Raktocchata kalpa: Raktocchata is taken with Parada, Haratala and Tuttha in equal quantity and mardana is done under sun and then subjected to suryaputa for 21 days. This is Lakshamsha dhatuvedhi.
- Devadali kalpa: Devadali phala is given bhavana with Ishwari swarasa. This does stambhana of Vanga.

- Pashanamanidruti kalpavidhanam: Has mentionings of Ratna musha, Khalva shodana vidhi and importance of Shuddha khalva.
- Abhraka druti kalpa: The potency of Samskarita Abhraka is mentioned as follows: Bhasma being ten times potent than S. Abhraka, Satva - ten times that of Bhasma, Abhraka Druti- ten times that of satva. 14 vidhis of Abhraka druti nirmana is also mentioned, where two of them includes use of palli purisha and kita.
- Hiraka Kalpa - Hiraka bhasma nirmana vidhi and its pareeksha vidhi is explained.

### Dehavada & Chikitsa

Some important Kalpas used in Chikitsa are as follows;

- Shweta Eranda Kalpa-
  - Eranda mula is collected on Pushya nakshatra. Taila is to be extracted from this and add Karpura to it and mardana is to be done. Siddhanjana is obtained. This Anjana is dristi prada 'Saptapatala Darshanam'.
  - Above Taila is to be added with Gandhaka and Madhu, all this is mixed well and placed in a Musha and kept in the ground for 1 month. This can be used in Prameha and Grahani (If taken early in the morning), is Sahasrayu prada (After Kaya shodhana, consume with Agar and Chandana for 2 months), Vishnu tulya (If consumed for 1 Year), Jeevanmukti (If consumed for 12 years)
- Pita Haridra kalpa- Ekamulika prayoga with different Anupana and Sevana kala is narrated as follows; Atishushka nisha churna is prepared, dose is 1 Nishka; This proves useful as Vishodhi (when taken along with Gomutra), Kukshigata roga nashana (When taken for 7 nights), Rupavan (When taken with water for 7 nights), Priyatama (when taken with Ghrita), If a person consumes 1 Nishka matra of this churna along with Madhu, for a period of 1 month to 1 year respective benefits can be drawn viz. Shahiva kanti, Kamala prabha, Pitavarna, Jaraadi vimukti, Sthira yauvvana, Surya sankasha, Manobhava, Prasannatma evam Durasharvana, Dhanavan, Shastrajanta, Sarvajnatva & Jaramarana varjita.
- Haridra varna Shalmali kalpa: The Taila of this tree is taken and added to Rajata drava to obtain Swarna. If this is consumed with Ghrita, one attains Divyakaya. And when consumed with Madhu it is Sarvarogahara.
- Shalmali kalpa: Pushpa and Shaka are to be consumed with Saindhava lavana to relieve Pradara.
- Somalata kalpa: Gandhaka druti obtained using this Kalpa is added with Parada and given mardana. Lepa of this heals kushta, Arshas, Bhagandara, Luta visha and Shiroroga.
- Krishnakaraveera kalpa: Parada is given bhavana with Panchanga swarasa of Karaveera and Marana is done. This Bhasma is again given mardana to turn it into Panka. This Panka is made into Gutika. When these Gutika is chewed, one would attain khecharatva.
- Kupilu kalpa: Kupilu taila is added with Gandhaka and given bhavanawith Gomutra. This is Sarvarogahara when consumed internally and kushtahara when applied externally.
- Kakajangha used with various Anupanas:

- Mula and Swarasa given bhavana with Aja vit- For Vrana ropana.
- Swarasa with Ushnajala- Veerya stambhana.
- Swarasa with Ghrta- Veerya stambhana, Jwaraghna.
- With Sheetodaka and Madhu- Chardighna.
- With Ksheera- stops Raktasrava.
- Applying Bandha to the karna- helps in Netraroga harana.
- With Madhu, Hingu and jala- Plihodara nashana.
- With Kushta- Shulahara.
- With Katutaila- Vataroga hara.
- With Guda and Ushnodaka- Sleshmahara.
- With Guda and Takra- Mutrakrchra hara.
- With Mahisha ksheera- Kshaya hara.
- With Bhallataka rasa- Kushtaghna
- Mula with Gorochana applied Tilaka- vashikarana
- Rasa with Gomutra- Mukhadharana in Mukharoga
- Mula with Bhrngaraja rasa- Keshavrdhi
- Made into Taila using Tila taila- Pana relieves Palitya.

### **Putayantra vidhanam**

This section mentions 8 types of Puta viz. Mahaputa, Gajaputa, Varahaputa, Kukkutaputa, Kapotaputa, Karishaputa, Bhandaputa and Lavakaputa.

### **Yantra nirupanam**

This section deals with 7 types of Yantras viz. Valukayantra, Vidhyadharayantra, Bhudarayantra, Bakayantra, Damaruyantra, Shambhu Naala yantra and Chaturbhesaja mudra.<sup>[4]</sup>

## **DISCUSSIONS**

‘Swara Tantram’ is an intriguing book in this era. Many Kalpas in this book are easy and most of them are pareekshaneeya. If utilized as per indication it will be very useful to cure many disorders. Some unique preparations used for Lohavedha, Dehavada and Chikitsa are revealed. Kamadhenu yantra, Ratna yantra, Khalva Shodhana vidhi etc are introduced along their preparation method and importance. It is said that the potency of the prepared Kalpa is even retained in the mutra of the person who consumes it, which can be used in Lohavedha. This highlights the pharmacodynamics and kinetics of the drug. Some potential Ekamulika prayogas are mentioned with different Anupanas and Sevana kaala for wide spectrum utility. All this being said, this book also presents with its own set of challenges. Although a wide range of Kalpas have

been explained, many drugs mentioned in it are not yet identified or even maybe extinct. It concentrates more on Lohavedha than Dehavada or Chikitsa. Further evaluation of the Tantram is required to obtain more clarity with regards to certain procedures involved in the propounded Kalpas.

## CONCLUSIONS

The most basic yearning of mankind is to lead a healthy and economically stable life. Rasashastra is a boon to the society which is befitting the purpose. Parada and jeeva are considered to be chanchala in nature. As Lohavedha provides stability and quality to the lower Dhatus (Cu, Pb, Sn etc), similarly Dehavada and chikitsa aim at relieving one from his ill condition and grant him optimum health and stability. Swarna Tantram is one such work of art which contains numerous Kalpas used for obtaining quality noble Dhatus and also quality life. Swarna Tantram is undoubtedly thus one of the noteworthy books in Rasashastra. Further practical exploration and research into the treatise is necessary to reap the Sara-satva of this book.

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